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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#)

SUBJECT: ONE MORE TIME: 17 NOVEMBER TERRORISTS APPEAL - AGAIN

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED - PROTECT ACCORDINGLY

11. (SBU) Eight of 13 convicted members of the Greek terrorist organization "17 November," which was responsible for 23 murders including five U.S. Embassy employees during a twenty-year period from the mid-1970s to earlier this decade, filed appeal briefs with the Arios Paghos Supreme Court on June 19, one day before the expiration of a deadline on appeals.

12. (SBU) The eight convicts, serving multiple life or lengthy prison sentences, include: 17N leader Alexandros Yiotopoulos, Savvas Xyros, Vasilis Xyros, Christodoulos Xyros, Vasilis Tzortzatos, Patroklos Tselentis, Heracles Kostaris, and Kostas Telios. The three Xyros brothers, 17N's primary killers, were all convicted on murder, explosives, and conspiracy charges. Tzortzatos (who consistently claimed he was tortured into confessing), Tselentis, Kostaris, and Telios were all convicted on murder and explosives charges in addition to felonies such as attempted murder and armed robbery. Chief assassin and 17N quartermaster Dimitris Koufodinas declined to appeal.

13. (SBU) In their lengthy briefs, the eight 17N convicts appealed a May 2007 lower appellate court verdict, which had upheld 218 of 219 felony convictions. In this latest appeal, the terror convicts claimed various grounds for seeking an overturn of their convictions, including alleged flaws in the evidentiary process, incompetence of the court, breach of procedure regarding the publicity of the trial, lack of clear reasoning in reaching a guilty verdict, and other such reasons. With this appeal, the eight will exhaust all judicial recourse in Greece. Their next possible step would be to file papers with the European Court of Human Rights.

SPECKHARD